

19 February 1961

Dr. Mildred E. Mathias
Council Chairman, ASPT
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University of California
Los Angeles 24, Calif.

Dear Mildred:

Thanks for your letters of Dec. 5 and 29. Sorry I am so slow in replying, but I have rather been on the move again lately. Before leaving London on Jan. 12, I dashed over on New Year's day to Stuttgart to pick up a Mercedes, drove in across Germany to Hamburg to the shipping agents, visited Leiden for a few days, and then spent nearly a week in Paris working with Guillaumin and Viret on my New Caledonian collections. We were 5 days crossing the Atlantic on the Queen Elizabeth. Promptly on arrival in New York City, a blizzard struck, the railroads in New England went on strike, and I caught a bug from the natives that sent me to bed for three days while snowbound in New Haven. I considered catching the next boat back to Brisbane but reflected that my family insists on eating regularly and that ASPT needed me on the Council. I visited and lectured on New Guinea at the NYBG and National Museum, dug my car out of the drifts of snow and red-tape on the Brooklyn docks, gathered up my luggage and family in New England, and headed west to escape the blizzards and bitter cold of the Atlantic Seaboard. Altho it has been cold in Iowa, we have no snow on the ground here. Iowa City leads a charmed existence so far but we are expecting the worst out of March. NW Ia. caught about 13 inches yesterday.

Readjusting to winter, Yankees, and working for aliving all add up to a highly traumatic experience. I expect to pull through it without any lasting ill-effects although I am badly infected with the desire to have more research time. I think a move from the corn fields is indicated. Know of any openings out there in that Iowa colony you call California?

Thanks for the notification that I was elected to the ASPT Council. That surprised me since I had not been aware that I was even a candidate this year. I shall, of course, be happy to serve though, as you know, I shall have to be in Honolulu in late August. I am very pleased to join your august body of senior taxonomists. I presume I was largely elected, however, because the members remembered my name from my secretarial days. This gives me a better excuse than I had before to evade the AAAS job. I hope you were able to find someone to handle that duty.

I haven't uncovered the other packet of Hydrocotyle seeds yet but hope to one of these days while unpacking. I was interested to hear that you too are enthusiastic about the rain forest. I wish I were in a position to work in it much of the time. Your summer activities in the Amazon basin sound most exciting. Will your daughter be working with the Peruvian highland and lowland Indians? Did you get a lot of your kodachromes in the course of your adventures? I should like to see them some time. We could compare slides on the lowland-highland similarities of Peru and New Guinea.

With best regards to you and my other friends at UCLA,

Sincerely,